
European Testimony Before Senate Foreign Relations Committee

By

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell

[The following is a reprint of remarks made by Secretary of State Colin Powell before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in Washington, D.C., June 20, 2001.]

I returned Saturday night from a week in Europe with President Bush as he visited Spain, Belgium, Sweden, Poland, and Slovenia. We had the opportunity to attend historic meetings with other North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) leaders and with leaders of the European Union (EU). We met also with President Putin of Russia.

Throughout the trip, President Bush emphasized the changing nature of Europe, change characterized by the cities we chose to visit as well as by the transforming nature of the President's message. And no city reflected this change more vividly than one of the oldest cities in Europe, Warsaw, a Warsaw whole, free, democratic, vibrant and alive. As President Bush said in Warsaw, "I have come to the center of Europe to speak of the future of Europe."

Make no mistake about this transformation, however. It is firmly anchored in what has made the Atlantic alliance the most powerful, the most enduring, the most historic alliance ever. Our common values, our shared experience, and our sure knowledge that when America and Europe separate, there is tragedy; when America and Europe are partners, there is no limit to our horizons.

The members of this committee know how fundamental are our security interests in Europe. You know that the transatlantic partnership is crucial to ensuring global peace and prosperity. It is also crucial to our ability to address successfully the global challenges that confront us such as terrorism, HIV/AIDS, drug trafficking, environmental degradation, and the proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction.

So President Bush's trip was about affirming old bonds, creating new frameworks, and building new relationships through which we can promote and protect our interests in Europe and in the wider world. President Bush did not hesitate to address head-on the perceptions held by some Europeans and by some Americans as well of American disengagement from the world and of unbridled unilateralism. Over and over again he underscored America's commitment to face challenges together with her partners, to strengthen the bonds of friendship and alliance, and to work out together the right policies for this new century of unparalleled promise and opportunity. "I hope that the unilateral theory is dead," the President said. "Unilateralists do not come to the table to share opinions. Unilateralists do not come here to ask questions."

President Bush's presence at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council was historic, not only because it was his first but because it was undoubtedly, in my memory at least, the most robust and substantive discussion of real issues the council has ever conducted.

We discussed the five key challenges facing the Alliance:

- Developing a new strategic framework with respect to nuclear weapons
- Maintaining and improving our conventional defense capabilities
- Enlarging the Alliance

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- Integrating southeast Europe
 - Reaching out to Russia

Since the day of President Bush's inauguration, our objective has been to consult with our allies on a new strategic framework for our nuclear posture. This framework includes our addressing the new challenges the alliance faces as a result of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the missiles that might deliver them. But it includes much more.

As President Bush told our allies "We must have a broad strategy of active non-proliferation, counterproliferation, ... a new concept of deterrence that includes defenses sufficient to protect our people, our forces, and our allies, and reduced reliance on nuclear weapons." We must move beyond the doctrines of the Cold War and find a new basis for our mutual security, one that will stand the trials of a new century as the old one did the century past.

In this context too, President Bush praised NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson's call for the allies to invest vigorously in developing their conventional defense capabilities, including voting larger defense budgets. The President pledged to work with European leaders to reduce the barriers to transatlantic defense industry cooperation. Moreover, he welcomed an enhanced role for the European Union in providing for the security of Europe so long as that role is properly integrated with NATO. The union and the alliance must not travel separate roads for their destinies are entwined.

Also an important part of our relations with Europe is the reality of an expanding alliance and a growing union. "I believe in NATO membership," the President said, "for all of Europe's democracies that seek it and are ready to share the responsibilities that NATO brings."

The question is not whether but when. And the Prague Summit in 2002 is the next "when." We are not planning to go to Prague with damage limitation in mind but with a clear intent to advance the cause of freedom. And our vision of Europe whole, free, and at peace cannot exclude the Balkans. That is why the President welcomed and applauded the leading role of NATO in bringing stability to southeast Europe.

President Bush acknowledged also the critical place that America holds in this process. Though 80 per cent of the NATO-led forces in the region are non-U.S., our GIs are critical. "We went into the Balkans together, and we will come out together," the President told the Europeans. "And," he added, "our goal must be to hasten the arrival of that day."

President Bush also commended the work of NATO and KFOR in helping bring an end to the violent insurgency in southern Serbia and cited their partnership with the European Union. He stressed that, building on this experience, NATO "must play a more visible and active role in helping the government in Macedonia to counter the insurgency there."

Consistent with this call, NATO, the U.S., and our allies are taking a proactive approach in Macedonia. The day after the NATO meeting of heads of state and government, on June 14, NATO Secretary General Robertson and European Union High Representative Solana, assisted by the State Department's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Eastern and Southern Europe, James Swigert, met with Macedonian government officials in Skopje to insist that the parties begin discussions immediately to hammer out solutions to inter-ethnic problems.

We are now in intense consultations with our allies and with the European Union on how we and NATO can best support a political solution in Macedonia and protect Macedonia's territorial integrity. Both we and our European partners know that we must do all we can to help the

Macedonian people avoid the same tragedy of violence and warfare that has afflicted so many of their neighbors in southeast Europe.

Equally important to our relations with Europe, is Russia. We have a stake in that great country's eventual success, success at democracy, at the rule of law, and at economic reform leading to economic recovery. Russia must be closely tied to the rest of Europe and the only way for that to happen is for Russia to be as successful at practicing democracy and building open markets as the rest of Europe. And that day will come. President Bush and President Putin had a productive meeting in Slovenia. President Putin's assessment was that "reality was a lot bigger than expectations."

The two presidents discussed the importance of a sound investment climate including firm establishment of the rule of law to Russia's future economic prosperity. And President Bush made clear America's willingness to engage in meaningful economic dialogue with Russia, beginning with the travel to Moscow in July of Secretaries O'Neill and Evans.

The two presidents also agreed to launch serious consultations on the nature of our security relationship within the context of a new approach for a new era. The challenge is to change our relationship from one based on a nuclear balance of terror to one based on openness, mutual confidence, and expanded areas of cooperation.

President Bush proposed, and President Putin agreed to, establishing a structured dialogue on strategic issues, and the two presidents charged Foreign Minister Ivanov and me, and Secretary Rumsfeld and his Russian counterpart along with their respective defense establishments, with conducting and monitoring this dialogue. Among the first subjects for this dialogue will be missile defense, offensive nuclear weapons, and the threat posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The presidents also agreed to continue their search for common solutions in the Balkans, the Middle East, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Afghanistan, and they discussed their common interests in developing the resources of the Caspian Basin.

President Bush also raised areas of concern such as Chechnya, arms sales to Iran, and religious and media freedom in Russia. He also expressed the hope that Russia would develop constructive relations with its neighbors such as Ukraine and Georgia.

Both presidents clearly look forward to continuing their discussions at the Genoa Summit in July. I believe we made significant progress in this first meeting and we will be working hard to ensure our follow-up is coordinated and productive.

The president also wanted to signal to European leaders — who themselves sometimes look too inwardly — that not only is our partnership crucial to our peace and prosperity but that the very fact we are at peace and are prosperous places obligations upon us.

President Bush said that "those who have benefited and prospered most from the commitment to freedom and openness have an obligation to help others that are seeking their way along that path." And he pointed to Africa. We must shut down the arms trafficking, fight the terrible scourge of HIV/AIDS, and help Africa enter the world of open trade that promises peaceful and prosperous days.

The President discussed these issues at the U.S.-European Union Summit in Goteborg. He made it clear that we must look even beyond Africa, to the challenges that confront us all as inhabitants of this earth. We must shape a balance of power in the world that favors freedom so

that from the pivot point of that balance we can lift up all people, protect our precious environment including dealing with global climate change, and defend and secure the freedoms of an ever-widening world of open and free trade, the rule of law, and respect for the rights of humanity and the dignity of life.

In this regard, President Bush and his European Union counterparts are committed to launching an ambitious new round of multilateral trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial meeting in Doha. We seek a round that will lead both to the further liberalization of world trade and to clarifying, strengthening and extending WTO rules, so as to promote economic growth and equip the trading system to meet the challenges of globalization.

This new round must equally address the needs and priorities of developing countries, demonstrate that the trading system can respond to the concerns of civil society, and promote sustainable development. We will work closely together and with our partners in the coming weeks to secure consensus to launch a round based on this substantive and forward looking agenda.

At the end of the day, Mr. Chairman, it was a very momentous trip. We are embarked in a new era. We have set in motion with some of our most important allies a mighty debate to determine the path we shall take. On the outcome of that debate may rest our future peace and prosperity. In my lifetime and yours, and in the reasonable span of our memories and our fathers' memories it is mainly in Europe that the colossal struggles have begun, struggles that in their evolution's could well have determined another fate for our world.

At the mid-point of the last century, we devised a way to prevent such struggles. It is called the transatlantic alliance. For this present century, we must shape that alliance anew but without sapping the great strengths that make it what it is. A historic opportunity awaits this president, this congress, and this people. We must seize it for all it is worth.